

From: RusselArt@aol.com@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/17/01 12:26pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am deeply disappointed by the current settlement proposals. Microsoft is a twice convicted monopolist and is getting away with a slap on the wrists.

I am a graphic artist that has been using computers for 16 plus years. Being a graphic artist, most of my computer use has been based on Apple's Macintosh platform, but I have used others, including Microsoft Windows. As a consumer, over the years I have witnessed Microsoft Corporations very aggressive behavior. I am no lawyer, but I consider some of the following to be anticompetitive, monopolistic behavior.

Years ago I used a software program that was first marketed by the former Aldus Corporation - Aldus Persuasion. Persuasion became an Adobe product after Aldus was purchased by Adobe. Persuasion was a presentation graphics program. Persuasion was considered by myself and others to be a much superior program to Microsoft's PowerPoint. Adobe, for whatever reason, decided to stop marketing Persuasion not long after Microsoft starting bundling PowerPoint for free with their Office suite of products. Coincidence? Perhaps, but how could Adobe compete in a marketspace where the competition gives their product away to gain market share? Now, I and everyone I work with uses PowerPoint. It has become the defacto standard for electronic presentations because it was bundled with Microsoft Office.

I have also witnessed two occasions, where in my opinion, Microsoft has made financial investments in their competitors to keep them in business:

My first example is Apple Computer, the only company with an operating system that can even be considered competition for Microsoft's Windows. Apple computer was in grave financial health and Microsoft made a \$150 million dollar investment and a five year software commitment. I think most people in the industry would agree that Microsoft's commitments saved Apple Computer from going out of business.

My second example is Corel Corporation. Corel is the maker of a suite of office products that are the only software programs that can be considered competition to Microsoft's Office software. Microsoft made another huge financial investment to keep Corel from going out of business. This time though, the investment raised so many eyebrows that Microsoft had to withdraw their name and the strings attached to the investment, yet leaving Corel with the financial investment to keep the company viable.

In my opinion, Microsoft's own monopolistic behavior has forced them to invest in their competitors to keep them from going out of business. The investments sustain Microsoft's only viable competitors. If that isn't evidence of total and complete control of a marketspace, I don't know what is.

Sincerely,

Steve Rassel
338 Edgewater Road
Sheboygan, WI 53081
Rasselart@aol.com
V 920.459.8375
F 920.459.9655